



Australian Government

Medicare Australia



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Provider Strategy at a glance



Medicare Australia *Provider Strategy at a glance 2008–2011*

Introduction

This document is a summary of Medicare Australia's Provider Strategy 2008–2011. The comprehensive Provider Strategy will be available on the Medicare Australia website.

What is the Provider Strategy?

The Provider Strategy is our approach to more effective and efficient service delivery in an increasingly electronic world—designed from your shoes. It is aimed at improving the way we do business together by making it easier, less intrusive and more efficient.

Our vision for the Provider Strategy

Providers are at the centre of our strategic thinking and development processes. By focussing on your changing needs we will deliver choice, convenience, superior products and outstanding services. We are committed to working in partnership with you to add value and consistently meet expectations.

Our purpose for the Provider Strategy

In this changing environment we want to:

- plan in partnership with you
- continue to build our working relationship, and
- further increase your trust and confidence in the programs we administer.

This mutual responsibility towards building a culture of voluntary compliance requires much more than an enforcement program. We want to actively encourage our providers to meet their obligations.

Why do we need a Provider Strategy?

As your practice and business needs evolve we want to deliver services that are relevant, streamlined, convenient and personalised. In positioning providers at its centre, the Provider Strategy offers a platform for enhanced working relationships as well as a high level framework for future planning across Medicare Australia.

When will we review the Provider Strategy?

During 2008–2011 the Provider Strategy will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it continues to meet your current and changing needs. As part of this review we will also highlight achievements and service improvements. These reviews will be included in updated versions of the comprehensive Provider Strategy available on our website.

How will we implement the Provider Strategy?

We are developing an internal provider service improvement program with clearly defined priorities and actions based on your feedback.



Five themes

From our research, five distinct themes emerged which you would like us to review and improve.



Key messages from providers

Our research shows that the landscape, roles and interactions with Medicare Australia are changing for all providers. We acknowledge that:

- *Increasingly, your practice managers and administrative staff are the coal-face in business dealings with us.*

- *You want us to recognise this constantly evolving business relationship.*

- *You want the right tools, processes and systems to ensure optimal delivery of payment and information services.*

- *You want consistency in the information and education we deliver to support our systems and processes.*

Key messages from Medicare Australia

In response to your feedback, we are focussing on:

- offering choice and convenience of claiming, including electronic Medicare claiming
- segmentation and research within provider groups to better understand your business needs
- helping you to get it right through information, education and support specifically targeting each provider segment
- working with communities and Indigenous health services to provide better access to health services for Indigenous people
- listening to, and working with the pharmacy community to get it right and make claiming easier, and
- supporting Aged Care providers to get it right and make claiming easier.

We will continue to build on our promises to you. We will:

• ***make it easier for you***

• ***get it right***

• ***be genuinely interested in you***

• ***respect your rights.***

Provider Strategy—the framework

The following pages outline the main themes of our Provider Strategy, the framework for addressing the key issues, and proposed activities to deliver the most beneficial outcomes.

The information is listed by provider segment—this isn't a 'one size fits all' approach—with the relevant theme and activities highlighted.

From September 2008, more details about our initiatives and activities for implementing the Provider Strategy will be included in the comprehensive document and available on the Medicare Australia website.

Medical, specialists, dental and allied health professionals

Theme 1 - Reduce red tape by streamlining processes

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
We have a choice of electronic claiming channels to best suit your business needs and a transitional support package for general practitioners and specialists (excluding pathologists) who take up electronic Medicare claiming.	<p>There will be an incentive package with three main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a practice payment of \$750 for metropolitan areas and \$1000 for regional and rural areas • 18c per transaction payment for electronic bulk bill and patient claims transmitted between 01/09/07 and 31/12/09 • the 90-day Pay Doctor Cheque Scheme available to specialists. 	We will deliver ongoing and continuous improvement of all Medicare Australia claiming channels.
There are a variety of channels in which you can do business and contact Medicare Australia.	<p>We are developing a single logon process through simplifying access and improving the usability of Medicare Australia's online facilities for providers.</p> <p>We are working to standardise provider web pages for a consistent look and feel, including a navigation menu to help users to move between applications.</p> <p>We will continue to offer opportunities to co-design integrated practices and services using existing and new forums as well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in focus groups and product walk-throughs • user testing of products and services. 	We are looking to develop a dedicated health professional portal to meet your needs.
Providers are required to complete a new provider number application form when they start work in a new location.	We will investigate a simplified and streamlined application process.	We will continue to investigate the introduction of a single provider number.

Theme 2 - Access to real time support and reference tools

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
You raise issues using a number of channels within Medicare Australia.	<p>To better understand your practice needs, we are designing an improved system to solve both administrative and technical issues as they arise.</p> <p>We will improve our technical helpdesk support for providers (in conjunction with software vendors).</p>	We aim to develop a complete Provider Problem Resolution System to analyse technical and administrative issues. This will identify trends for review and modification.
<p>In order to provide you with nationally consistent high quality and timely advice, we are developing a national curriculum for all major Medicare Australia programs. This will ensure a nationally consistent approach for training our service officers regardless of location and/or channel.</p> <p>We are reviewing our telephony platform and providing recommendations to improve the environment.</p>	<p>Continue to develop and implement the national curriculum.</p> <p>Consider and implement recommendations from the review including an efficient escalation process.</p>	<p>Continue to develop our training curriculum and technological systems to support current and future business needs.</p> <p>Continue to review and enhance our telephony platform to suit business needs.</p>

Theme 3 - Improve partnerships and relationships		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
The Stakeholder Consultative Group (SCG) meets quarterly to discuss new initiatives and significant issues.	We will build and continue on the success of these arrangements and establish working parties for complex priority initiatives.	We will continue to meet with the SCG to address your issues.
We have primary and secondary account managers in place who are allocated to all major stakeholders to facilitate a more focused and consistent approach to managing our relationships.	We will build on the success of account managers by continuing to strengthen our relationships.	Account managers will continue to have a major role in communicating with, and listening to, the needs of our stakeholders.

Theme 4 - Enhance communications		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
We have a number of communication resources and channels.	We will review our approach to the development of communication strategies to make it easier for you to get the information that you need.	We will continue to refine the targeting of our communication resources to meet the needs of our provider segments.

Theme 5 - Better support and compliance through education		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
We will continue to work with stakeholders to gain a shared understanding of the strategic compliance risks we are facing and how we can address these collaboratively.	We will review the strategic risks to compliance and our operational responses in the light of your changing business needs.	We will continue to enhance education and support products online.
Medicare Australia is committed to building a culture of voluntary compliance and supporting providers to get it right through the provision of effective information and education.	We will improve the quality of our technical advice and improve access to this advice through authoritative and consistent Medicare Australia position statements.	We will continue to partner with stakeholders to improve access to practical and timely education and information and make it easier for providers to correctly use Medicare and the PBS.
<p>We are providing online education about Medicare and the PBS and delivering education at major conferences and to new medical practitioners.</p> <p>We are developing support material on a range of key complex Medicare topics, including Chronic Disease Management.</p> <p>We have developed resources for optometrists and prescribers in public hospitals participating in the PBS reforms.</p> <p>We are responding to requests for education from external stakeholders.</p>	<p>We will increase our interactive online support through e-Learning products for new and experienced providers. We will provide support tools to make it easier for providers to get information on complex topics like Chronic Disease Management.</p> <p>We will enhance the consistency and quality of education and support provided to new medical practitioners and we are working with stakeholders to improve access to our products. We will expand our partnerships with external stakeholders.</p>	We will continue to work with stakeholders to provide timely and accurate advice and education to support compliance.

Practice managers

Theme 1 - Reduce red tape by streamlining processes

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
Practice managers are the pivotal communication point for all providers however they are restricted from obtaining certain provider and patient information.	We will investigate practical solutions to these restrictions.	We will develop a secure logon to the online portal for administrative users.

Theme 2 - Access to real time support and reference tools

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
Currently you raise issues using a number of channels within Medicare Australia.	To better understand your practice needs we are designing an improved system to solve both administrative and technical issues as they arise. We will improve our technical helpdesk support (in conjunction with software vendors).	We aim to develop a complete Provider Problem Resolution System to analyse technical and administrative issues. This will identify trends for review and modification.
In order to provide you with nationally consistent high quality and timely advice, we are developing a national curriculum for all major Medicare Australia programs. This will ensure a nationally consistent approach for training our service officers regardless of location and/or channel. We are reviewing our telephony platform and providing recommendations.	We will continue to develop and implement the national curriculum. We will consider and implement recommendations from the review including an efficient escalation process.	We will continue to develop our training curriculum and technological systems to support current and future business needs. We will continue to review and enhance our telephony platform to suit business needs.

Theme 3 - Improve partnerships and relationships		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
We will work with communities and Indigenous health services to provide better access to health services for Indigenous people.	Medicare Liaison Officers (MLOs) will work closely with key stakeholders, communities and Indigenous health service providers to build relationships with government agencies and develop a collaborative approach to improving access.	We will continue our culturally appropriate outreach work through our MLOs working closely with key stakeholders, communities and Indigenous health service providers.
We have primary and secondary account managers in place who are allocated to all major stakeholders to facilitate a more focused and consistent approach to managing our relationships.	We will build on the success of our account managers by continuing to strengthen our relationships.	Account managers will continue to have a major role in communicating with, and listening to, the needs of our stakeholders.

Theme 4 - Enhance communications		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
Practice managers are the gatekeepers for provider information. We are developing communication resources targeted at practice managers to reflect changing provider business needs.	We will develop a communications strategy to meet the needs of practice managers.	We will continue to review and improve our communication with practice managers.

Theme 5 - Better support and compliance through education		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
We are establishing new arrangements for a more effective education program.	We will provide access to practical and timely education and support through e-Learning about the Medicare program and provision of reference guides for complex Medicare items.	We will implement a national education strategy.

Aged Care providers

Theme 1 - Reduce red tape by streamlining processes

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>Aged Care Online Claiming has three channels available for sending claims electronically, including Web Forms.</p> <p>Currently Aged Care online transactions are processed within an overnight (24 hour) turn around period.</p> <p>The Medicare Australia website is an important channel for you to access and locate information relevant to your business needs.</p>	<p>All Aged Care claiming forms will be available electronically on the Medicare Australia website.</p> <p>We have started the development of a new payment system to allow for real-time processing.</p> <p>We are working to standardise provider web pages for a consistent look and feel, including a navigation menu to help users to move between pages.</p>	<p>Continue to identify online improvements.</p> <p>We will have implemented a new real-time payment system.</p> <p>We will continue to review the website to ensure its relevance.</p>

Theme 2 - Access to real time support and reference tools

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>In order to provide you with nationally consistent high quality and timely advice, we are currently developing a national curriculum for all major Medicare Australia programs. This will ensure a nationally consistent approach to training our service officers regardless of location and/or channel.</p>	<p>Continue to develop and implement the national curriculum.</p>	<p>Continue to develop our training curriculum and technological systems to support current and future business needs.</p>

Theme 3 - Improve partnerships and relationships		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>We have regular meetings with Aged Care peak bodies—Aged Care Association Australia (ACAA) and Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA).</p> <p>The Stakeholder Consultative Group (SCG) meets quarterly to discuss new initiatives and significant issues.</p>	<p>We will have a collaborative and robust relationship with these groups.</p> <p>We will build and continue on the success of these arrangements and establish working parties for complex priority initiatives.</p>	<p>We will continue to build our relationships with these groups.</p> <p>We will continue to meet with the SCG to address your issues.</p>
<p>We have primary and secondary account managers in place who are allocated to all major stakeholders to facilitate a more focused and consistent approach to managing our relationships.</p>	<p>We will build on the success of account managers by continuing to strengthen our relationships.</p>	<p>Account managers will continue to have a major role in communicating with, and listening to, the needs of our stakeholders.</p>

Theme 4 - Enhance communications		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>We are reviewing our approach to the development of communication strategies, including segmentation analysis of the Aged Care provider sector.</p>	<p>We will develop a communication strategy tailored to Aged Care providers with a focus on the online claiming take-up strategy.</p>	<p>We will continue to review and improve our Aged Care communications strategy.</p>

Theme 5 - Better support and compliance through education		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>We have a continuous education program for Aged Care providers about online claiming.</p>	<p>Our education products will be reviewed regularly to ensure high quality information about online claiming and support to meet compliance obligations.</p>	<p>We will continue to review the educational needs of our Aged Care providers.</p>

Pharmacists

Theme 1 - Reduce red tape by streamlining processes

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
Online Claiming for PBS is now the main claiming channel.	We will work collaboratively to identify and implement agreed changes to PBS claiming.	We will continue to implement agreed changes.

Theme 2 - Access to real time support and reference tools

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
In order to provide you with nationally consistent high quality and timely advice, we are currently developing a national curriculum for all major Medicare Australia programs. This will ensure a nationally consistent approach for training our service officers regardless of location and/or channel.	We will continue to develop and implement the national curriculum.	We will continue to develop our training curriculum and technological systems to support current and future business needs.

Theme 3 - Improve partnerships and relationships

Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>We have regular meetings with the Pharmacy Guild on PBS issues.</p> <p>The Stakeholder Consultative Group (SCG) meets quarterly to discuss new initiatives and significant issues.</p>	<p>We will build on our collaborative relationship.</p> <p>We will build and continue on the success of these arrangements and establish working parties for complex priority initiatives.</p>	<p>We will continue our collaborative relationship.</p> <p>We will continue to meet with the SCG to address your issues.</p>
We have primary and secondary account managers in place who are allocated to all major stakeholders to facilitate a more focused and consistent approach to managing our relationships.	We will build on the success of account managers by continuing to strengthen our relationships.	Account managers will continue to have a major role in communicating with, and listening to, the needs of our stakeholders.

Theme 4 - Enhance communications		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>While Bulletin Board and the Medicare Australia website are the main communication channels, we are reviewing our approach to the development of communication strategies, including segmentation analysis of the Pharmacy provider sector.</p>	<p>We will develop a tailored approach to communication for pharmacists and review activities and channels where relevant.</p>	<p>We will continue to identify opportunities to enhance our communication through increased use of our website and other channels.</p>

Theme 5 - Better support and compliance through education		
Currently in place	Within one year	Within one to three years
<p>We will continue to work with stakeholders to gain a shared understanding about the strategic compliance risks we are facing and how we can address these collaboratively.</p> <p>To increase voluntary compliance and raise awareness of our compliance program, we are building and maintaining an open dialogue with stakeholders.</p> <p>We are providing online education about Medicare and the PBS, as well as delivering education at major conferences and to new medical practitioners.</p> <p>We are delivering education to all future pharmacists through collaboration with universities and other organisations.</p>	<p>We will improve our education and support program for community pharmacies, pharmacy staff and student pharmacists.</p>	<p>Develop online and interactive education products for pharmacists, pharmacy staff and student pharmacists.</p> <p>We will continue to review the education needs of the pharmacy provider.</p>



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